

The Republic

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Editorial

MANILA'S FOOD SITUATION

There has not been much vision, no initiative, and no energy in the handling of the food situation in Manila so far. This is not saying too much. Perhaps the government has not had the time to do any ample planning having been hard pressed for quick remedies at every turn. But that does not justify the failure of those concerned to visualize several months ago today's situation of the city then rapidly developing and taking shape as a major crisis and to work out a long-range plan that might now at least partially ameliorate our very acute food difficulties.

Undoubtedly, it is not as easy to say as to do things specially in critical circumstances such as are prevailing at present in this country. Yet we feel we should not remain silent over a condition of affairs that readily betrays either failure or inability to take the necessary vigorous measures to protect the public or at least alleviate their sufferings. The solution of Manila's foodstuff problem is, and has always been, the primary duty of the City Government. Whether the National Government has intervened in its solution or not, that did not relieve the city of its immediate and unavoidable obligation to its inhabitants. On the contrary, even with the National Government intervening in the matter, did the city ever put forward any definite plan of relief, worked out on the strength of its supposed special qualification to do so by reason of its supposed better knowledge of the needs of the people?

Not quite long ago, we used to be encouraged with rosy and very optimistic reports from very responsible officials to the effect that there was more than enough rice available to Manila for the rest of the year. We remember statements to this effect by the then Food Administrator and by the Food Production Campaign Manager. Now it turns out that there is no such rice or rather, there is just enough for the direct and moral obligations of the government and most of it not yet here. May it not be asked "What has been done in the past to bring to Manila the 'more than enough' stocks in the provinces?" It could not be said then, as it is being said now, probably with much truth, that there were no transportation facilities and no fuel.

The inevitable conclusion is very simple. Either we were being hoodwinked in the past with plain criminal untruths or we had officials who did not know what they were doing and talking about. Whatever happened, it could not have been very soon after that the truth came out and still there was little if any vision at all and no initiative and no energy shown to provide against a crisis such as we have now. And where they have been lacking, insofar as the people of Manila are concerned, is in the government of their city.

To mention what Baguio is doing for its population is probably not a fair comparison. But it is indeed creditable and admirable what Baguio has accomplished for its inhabitants, after the NARIC and BIBA had ceased to provide rice for them. Baguio City went into the rice and transportation business, employing for the purpose all its surplus and, later on, borrowed funds, enlisting the assistance of its big-hearted residents and commanding transportation facilities. Thus, while Baguio people continue receiving rice rations regularly today, Manilaans face the dread of starvation although there is much black-market rice at prohibitive prices for the few who can afford it cost.

We are told that December and the new rice will bring relief. But can the starving hold off their hunger, can they be told to wait until December and for the new harvest when right now they are dying for lack of the barest nourishment?

Manila's Food...

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The foregoing is based on an interview had with the Military Governor of Manila by the Editor of "THE REPUBLIC."

The following questions and answers were exchanged:

"Is there anything being done to relieve the food supply situation in the City?"

"There is none, pending action by the Joint Government and Army Committee on the subject."

"What do you expect out of that Committee?"

"Complete solution of the food problem, particularly rice. When the new harvest is ready, the City will be assured of an adequate supply of rice. With rice available, the rest will take care of themselves—the prices of all other foodstuffs will automatically come down. Besides, what can we do? We don't handle the rice and other foodstuff control agencies. The National Government has them. This branch takes care of one, that branch has another and it's only now that they take cognizance of the City as you see with the Metropolitan Police being returned to the Mayor, after much sad experience. Take again the MCCA. Why should they be separate and independent from the DANAS when they grew directly out of the latter? The City has always insisted on the DANAS system because they are direct agencies of the people, the people compose them, yet we have the MCCA's. But when rice is available, I shall see that the DANAS handle its distribution."

"Is there anything being done to supply the City with other foodstuffs just now?"

"There is none, because nothing can be done unless rice can be supplied and used as a lever to bring down the prices of other commodities."

"What was this plan regarding the use of trucks which was the subject of a conference with truck owners recently?"

"Those trucks were needed by the

Navy and, of course, I told the Navy and the owners that when the trucks come back from the provinces they should bring foodstuffs and help increase the supply in the City."

"How about City sanitation—all the streets are littered with piling garbage?"

"Yes, but we cannot help it. I have told the people to dispose of their own garbage, but they won't. We cannot get laborers at all, nor alcohol for trucks nor vehicles—not even push carts."

"How about the forced labor system to secure labor?"

"I have wanted that all along, but that is limited to food production."

"Is money a problem of the City?"

"No. We have plenty of money and, even if we did not have, we could borrow as much as we need."

"Apparently, the City must wait for December to come, for not till then can we hope for any improvement in the food situation?"

"Well, we are doing our best but I guess we will just have to wait until we get the new rice."

City Police...

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Executive Order No. 98 reads as follows:

"In view of the proclamation of martial law and the appointment of the Mayor of the City of Manila as Military Governor therein, and the public interest so requiring, I, JOSE P. LAUREL, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the authority conferred upon me by Act No. 10, do hereby order:

"SECTION 1. The officers and men of the present Metropolitan Constabulary and such number of the former Secret Service Division of the Manila Police taken over by the Bureau of Investigation upon

its organization as may be determined by agreement between the Military Governor for the Eighth District and the Director of the Bureau of Investigation with the approval of the Minister of Home Affairs are, without the necessity of new appointments, hereby placed under the immediate control and supervision of the Military Governor of the Eighth District. This organization shall be known as the Metropolitan Constabulary.

"SEC. 2. With the exception of the commissioned officers, who shall be appointed in accordance with existing laws by the President of the Republic of the Philippines upon the recommendation of the Military Governor, all new appointments in the Metropolitan Constabulary shall be issued by the Military Governor with the approval of the Minister of Home Affairs as Chief Delegate of the President and Inspector-General of Martial Law.

"SEC. 3. The appropriations corresponding to the position transferred from the Bureau of Investigation to the Metropolitan Constabulary pursuant to the provision of section 1 hereof are hereby returned to the City of Manila and made available for the same purpose.

"SEC. 4. All laws or executive orders or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

"SEC. 5. This Order shall take effect upon its promulgation."

New Location Of Some Offices

The following offices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources are housed in the Science Building, Daita Avenue, corner Herran street: The Offices of the Minister and Vice-Minister, telephone No. 5-73-21; Bureau of Animal Industry, telephone No. 2-06-05, together with the Philippine Livestock Association; and the Institute of Science and Technology, telephone No. 5-68-37.

The Bureau of Lands is now located at 244 Jua Luna with the Bureau of Forestry, telephone No. 4-99-57 and Bureau of Fisheries, telephone No. 4-70-38, together with the respective federations under each.

The Bureau of Plant Industry, telephone No. 5-67-09, which now houses the National Rice Growers' Cooperative Association, the Federation of Coconut Growers' Cooperative Association, and temporarily, the Bureau of Agricultural Development and the National Food Production Campaign Office with telephone No. 5-67-72, remains at its previous location at 692 San Andres, Malate, Bagumbayan.

Appointments...

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Chairman of the former Philippine Executive Commission dated March 12, 1942, whether such appointments be regular or special original appointments, or ordinary promotions, or special case promotions, shall be made by the Head of the Ministry concerned.

"2. In the case of original appointments or promotions made by the Head of Ministry, the same shall be processed through the Commissioner of Civil Service. When made by the Commissioners, the same shall, likewise, be processed through the Commissioner of Civil Service in the case of appointments of employees in the Cities of Manila and Cavite and in the provinces of Bulacan, Cavite, Rizal, and Palawan, or through the Chairman of the local civil service examining committee or duly authorized representative of the Commissioner of Civil Service in the case of appointments in other Administrative Districts.

"3. During the present state of emergency, the Commissioners of Administrative Districts are hereby authorized to act for the Ministers of State in all cases of appointments or promotions in their respective administrative districts, provided that all such appointments made shall be deemed temporary until final approval as herein stated, in which event the effect of such approval shall retroact to the date of original appointment or promotion.

"4. On the first day of each month or as soon as conditions permit, a detailed report of all appointments and promotions, together with Civil Service Forms

Matsuoka Passes Away in Japan; President Extends Condolences

President Jose P. Laurel expressed himself deeply grieved over the death of Masao Matsuoka, former head of the Manila Shinbun-sya, now the Philippine Publications, who passed away in Japan last week.

In a letter to Junji Yamada, president of the Philippine Publications, President Laurel extended his condolences stating that the Japanese people have lost a very valuable man and the Filipino people a helpful friend.

The President's message follows: "I am deeply grieved to learn of the death of Mr. Masao Matsuoka, former President of the Manila Shinbun-sya, and I am extending to your organization as well as to the Mainichi Shimbun-sha and the family of the deceased my most heartfelt condolences.

"Mr. Matsuoka devoted almost a half of his valuable life to the serv-

ice of your publications with the noble object of establishing better understanding and cooperation between Japan and the Philippines. His pleasing personality, his lofty ideals and his training have greatly contributed to the furtherance of this worthy cause.

"With the demise of Mr. Matsuoka, the Japanese people have lost a very valuable man and the Filipino people a helpful friend."

Mr. Matsuoka died of illness in Tokyo on October 28, at the age of 64. He became president of the Philippine Publications on October 12, 1942, after having been assigned to the Philippines by the Mainichi Shimbun-sha. He served as head of the firm until December 15, 1943, when he returned to Japan to recuperate from illness.

The deceased counted among his friends President Jose P. Laurel, members of the Philippine Cabinet, General Emilio Aguinaldo, General Artemio Ricarte, Don Pedro Aunario and other prominent leaders of the Philippines.

Active in cultural and social work, the late Mr. Matsuoka encouraged and assisted in the development of cultural enterprises along lines of Asian spirit. He was instrumental in the holding of musical, cultural, literary and Nippongo contests while in the Philippines. At the time of his death he was adviser to the Mainichi Shimbun-sha.

Real Estate...

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and in the same manner and be subject to the same penalties for delinquency as the regular tax.

The text of Ordinance No. 42 reads as follows:

"There being an urgent need for increasing the revenues of the City of Manila to enable it to meet the rising cost of existing public services and provide for those that may be required by the present emergency, as well as for readjusting the tax rates on real property located within the jurisdiction of the City with the present taxable value of the same, I, JOSE P. LAUREL, President of the Republic of the Philippines, pursuant to the authority conferred upon me by Article III, Section 14, of the Constitution, do hereby promulgate this Ordinance:

"SECTION 1. The annual real estate tax prescribed by law respectively for the City of Manila and the former municipalities incorporated therewith under Executive Order No. 76 of the Chairman of the former Executive Commission is hereby increased by one hundred per centum. The additional tax herein authorized shall accrue on the first of January of each year and shall be collected at the same time and in the same manner and be subject to the same penalties for delinquency as the regular tax; Provided, however, That for the year 1944, the said additional tax is levied effective October 1, 1944, and shall be computed and collected on the basis of three months from October 1 to December 31, 1944, and shall not be subject to any penalty if paid on or before October 31, 1944; otherwise, the same shall be subject to all the prescribed penalties for delinquency as the regular real estate tax for the year 1944.

"SEC. 2. The proceeds of the additional tax herein provided for shall be subject to the approval of the President of the Republic of the Philippines, to be used for public relief and for such other public purposes as may be required by the existing emergency.

"SEC. 3. All laws, executive orders, or ordinances, or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly."

Revision of...

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poses, the monthly rental for each part or floor shall be determined in accordance with the two preceding rules, as the case may be. However, if the house or building was not rented during any of the three months preceding December 8, 1944, then the rental shall be determined by considering the customary rental charged during these months for houses or buildings of similar nature or situated in the same conditions or circumstances.

The executive order defines the terms "indigent or needy person" and "indigent or needy family" as not to include any person who, not being the head of a family, has an average monthly income exceeding ₱100 for the last three months immediately preceding the date when the executive order took effect, or any family whose head or any member thereof has an average monthly income exceeding ₱200 or where the combined average monthly incomes of such head and members of his family for this period exceeds ₱200.

Executive Order No. 99 also requires that, within 30 days after the effectivity of the Order, or on or before November 30 this year, owners of houses for rent shall submit anew a report of their house rentals to the Military Governor of Manila upon payment of the fee of ₱5. Failure to submit the report shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than 6 months or by a fine of not more than ₱200, or both, in the discretion of the court. Thereafter, owners of houses shall submit a report within the first 10 days of each calendar year and for filing such annual reports, the owners shall pay a fee of ₱5.

The executive order further provides for the payment of fees in the following cases:

For application of an owner to increase the rentals of his house

or houses, a filing fee of ₱10;

For petition of each tenant to decrease his house rental, a fee of ₱3.

The Committee for the Control of House Rentals is required under the executive order to meet twice a week and each member shall be entitled to a per diem of ₱30 every session actually attended, besides a monthly traveling allowance of ₱75.